

**VIRGINIA ROANOKE RIVER BASIN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**  
**February 26, 2003**  
**Clarksville Community Center, Clarksville, VA**

**Attendance: (all VRRBAC members or representatives except Del. Byron, Del. Hurt, Del. Thomas, Evelyn Janney, John Primiano, Charles Poindexter, Ken Dugan, Mike McEvoy, and Lee Eddy), DEQ: G. Anderson; DCR: Tim Ott and Barry Hughes**

**Call to Order:**

Chairman Feild called the meeting to order.

**Welcome:**

Melinda Moran representing the Town of Clarksville welcomed the Committee, guests, and visitors to Clarksville. She expressed Clarksville's appreciation for the work everyone was doing and noted the importance of the Roanoke River and the Lake to the community.

**Recognition of Visitors:**

Chairman Feild introduced all members, staff, and visitors. Visitors included Bob Lindsay, Roanoke River Basin Association Executive Director, Cathy Cochelin, Editor of the News-Progress, Wilmer Stoneman, Va. Farm Bureau, Richard Seekins, Kerr-Tarr Council of Governments, and P. K. Pettus. Ann Austin represented Congressman Virgil Goode at the meeting.

**January 22, 2003 meeting minutes:**

A motion was made to approve the minutes as drafted. The motion was seconded and passed.

**Terry Brown, USACE, " Basin Water Flows and Flow Interrelationships Throughout the Basin":**

- This very informative presentation discussed basin water flows and flow interrelationships throughout the basin. Discussion also entailed the challenges of managing the system during drought and flood periods. The talk generated ample questions and discussion. Greg Anderson will try to obtain a copy for distribution to members.
- It was noted that flood maps could now be linked with USGS stream gage information such that 48-60 hours notice could often be given of flood situations.
- Concern was expressed by Delegate Wright of the low level of striper population the last couple of years. This is to the detriment of tourism in the region. This appears to be at least partially a function of dam releases. A fish ladder has not been installed due to the expense. There is no natural reproduction in Gaston, so NC likely puts in any fish found there. NC manages the fishery in Lake Gaston and VA manages the fishery in Kerr Reservoir. A trap and haul operation from Roanoke Rapids to Kerr is being given major consideration during re-licensing discussions. This is apparently a more reliable and less costly method to improve the fishery.
- During the drought changes were made at Smith Mt. Lake/Leesville without consultation with the lower lake areas. Apparently the different lakes management groups were both trying to conserve storage because no one knew how long this draught might last. Senator Ruff questioned whether this was a good policy for the two groups to be managing without consultation. Terry Brown indicated that it would be preferable to have a Roanoke River team to work together on such issues. The groups are now invited to participate in the drought management process.

**Terry Brown, USACE, " Basin Water Flows and Flow Interrelationships Throughout the Basin"  
(continued)**

- The Virginia Beach Pipeline impact on the basin was discussed. During the drought they actually purchased water from the City of Norfolk to lessen the impact on the basin. It was noted that this was not required on their part and as the population grows it may be harder to do that. Senator Hawkins stated that no court would ever cut off the 60 MGD of water to a population dependant upon it for health and viability. Historically population has been disbursed based on the availability of natural resources. The nation is now entering a phase where resources no longer limit population. Robert Conner commended Virginia Beach for being a good neighbor, citing their providing money for Hydrilla control, money for the Lake Gaston Association, and providing weekly withdrawal flow information. It was pointed out that Va. Beach needed the water and that they understood public relations. However the question remained, how long would Va. Beach continue to be a good neighbor? It was mentioned that there is an effort to use the drought index as a protection mechanism in some manner as part of the re-licensing process. This issue has not yet been resolved. Senator Hawkins noted that Virginia Tech was now looking at desalination as an alternative water treatment process. It appears to be a viable process now as compared to past years. This group needs to encourage such investigation. It was noted that San Diego is using reverse osmosis to remove salt from the water. The fact that others are considering pipelines to the basin was discussed. Water resources are recognized by this group as essential for the economic vitality of communities/stakeholders in the Roanoke River Basin. Bigger localities should not be allowed to pipe out Roanoke River water to the detriment of the people of the Roanoke River Basin. Senator Ruff indicated that this cause was probably the biggest reason VRRBAC was formed. VRRBAC must stay abreast of such projects and stakeholders must work together so that basin resources can be managed prudently.
- Read Charlton asked about the status of the siltation load going to the basin. Terry Brown indicated that Kerr was designed to receive about 0.5 acre-ft./sq. mile of drainage area each year. The lake and other regional lakes are receiving about 0.25-0.27 acre-ft./sq. mile of drainage area each year. Therefore the lake is receiving about 50% of the load anticipated during design.

**Reimbursement Issue:**

Senator Hawkins asked that Greg Anderson, DEQ, look into DEQ reimbursing members for expenses. Pertinent State Code includes 62.1-69.34 and 2.2-2813. Suggested that the Rappahannock Commission Model may provide some insight for this committee. He suggested that the Rappahannock Director be obtained to speak to the group at possibly the next meeting. Localities help provide monies for this group

**Coleman Long, USACE, "John H. Kerr 216 Study"**

- This very helpful presentation described the 216 Study process and provided an update on the John H. Kerr 216 Study. Coleman Long will send his presentation to Greg Anderson to forward to members for their use.
- The presentation elicited many questions and much discussion from the group.
- The FERC re-licensing of Lake Gaston and Roanoke Rapids created the impetus for this study. VA and NC sponsor the study. The Advisory Committee that VRRBAC wants to be represented on is the Sponsor's Advisory Committee. It was indicated that the USACE has recommended that VRRBAC be given a seat on this committee. The USACE Wilmington District has worked with the State of North Carolina and the Commonwealth of Virginia on a final PMP and Feasibility Cost Share Agreement (FCSA). The USACE Headquarters staff approved the FCSA on 14 February 2003. Currently, the two State Sponsors' representatives are signing the FCSA. After the FCSA is signed, the first phase of the feasibility study will begin. The technical working groups will begin to meet and work on the study as soon as funding is received.

**Coleman Long, USACE, “John H. Kerr 216 Study”(continued)**

- John Feild asked if it would be possible to re-examine the Island Creek Study previously done during the course of this study. Island Creek was apparently considered for the location of an impoundment upstream of Kerr and perhaps warrants another look since demands have changed significantly. Coleman Long indicated that it could be looked at.
- Watt Foster asked if he was familiar with the Cumberland County Impoundment project that landowners in that County were involved with. Specifically interested in the regulatory process steps required for such a project. The answer given was the steps required for the USACE and State permit process.
- Robert Conner asked if the Hydrilla problem would be looked at in the 216 study. The answer that it had not been considered because USACE was limited to looking at operational changes and/or structural changes in the study. A discussion about Hydrilla control ensued. NC seems to have an active program for aquatic growth control. The status of the Virginia program was not known. The USACE used to have funding for control of aquatic vegetation but does not participate at this time. Coleman Long indicated that he could not imagine Hydrilla taking over the basin but if it did interest in Corps funding for control of aquatic plants may be rekindled. Apparently the plant has been found as far up the basin as Smith Mountain Lake.
- Coleman Long indicated that there would be a separate 216 study conducted for Philpott Lake.

**Establishment of Standing Sub-committees:**

John Feild announced the structure of the standing sub-committees. An effort was made to effect a geographical balance and to parallel the structure of the NC counterpart so that the groups can easily interface with each other. Other outside people will also serve on the groups. Senator Ruff suggested tasking the committees with developing a game plan to ensure appropriate geographical and technical membership on the groups. It was recommended that P. K. Pettus serve on the River Interests sub-committee. The Sub-committee membership is as follows:

Agriculture and Forestry.

Haywood Hamlet - Chairman  
Evelyn Janney - Vice Chairman  
Robert Conner  
Kenneth Dugan

River Interests

Watt Foster - Chairman  
Read Charlton - Vice Chairman  
Kenneth Dugan  
Lee Eddy

Municipal Interests and Permit Holders

John Primiano - Chairman  
Lee Eddy - Vice Chairman  
Mike McEvoy  
Read Charlton

Lake Interests

Robert Conner - Chairman  
Charles Poindexter - Vice Chairman  
John Feild  
Watt Foster

Water

Kenneth Dugan - Chairman  
Robert Conner - Vice Chairman  
Mike McEvoy  
John Primiano

**John H. Kerr 216 Study:**

The presentation by Coleman Long covered this topic. Greg Anderson will reword the request to Secretary Murphy asking that his office give VRRBAC representation on the Sponsor's Advisory Committee for the Study.

**Status of Pending Legislation:**

- Greg Anderson reported that HB 1451, correcting the length of the Staunton Scenic River, had passed the House and Senate.
- Senate Bill 1245 was incorporated into 1221 and passed the House and Senate. This bill deals with Water Supply Planning in the State. Senator Ruff indicated that controversial language concerning inter-basin transfer of water and the "grandfathering" of some facilities was changed.
- HB 1970 was incorporated into HB 1627. This bill created a Master Virginia Scenic River Board. Senator Ruff said the bill authorized local representation on sub-committees. He would encourage the use of Local supervisors to identify appropriate local representatives.
- SB1315 dealing with collegial bodies including this Committee and the Bi-State Commission passed the House and Senate. This bill changed some the legislation establishing this Committee and the Bi-State Commission. It also contained provisions for DEQ to compensate and reimburse members for expenses, based upon appropriations.
- Senator Ruff asked that a summary of the bills be provided to the members. He also suggested that the Committee be kept informed of the progress of any work conducted that is associated with SB1221.

**Other Business:**

- Bob Lindsay, Executive Director of the Roanoke River Basin Association (RRBA), stated that RRBA was in the process of reexamining their role in light of the creation of the legislated VA and NC groups. RRBA wants to work for the betterment of the basin and to collaborate with the groups rather than to be in a competitive role. Chairman Feild spoke to the wide recognition of RRBA and their importance to the basin. He noted that members of this group were associated with RRBA. He indicated there was not a conflict with the missions of the different groups.
- Robert Conner made a motion from a standing committee that VRRBAC take a stand against any inter-basin transfers that would have a substantial negative impact on the people of the basin. Since the motion came from a standing committee, no second was required. The motion passed. The overall consensus of VRRBAC is that the group must protect our water resources and growth potential. Water resources are recognized as essential for the economic vitality of communities/stakeholders in the Roanoke River Basin. Richard Seekins indicated that there were similar feelings on the NC side.
- Chairman Feild asked that Greg Anderson circulate a letter from Richard Seekins to the Committee. This letter gave information concerning the NC developments associated with the Bi-State Commission.
- There was discussion concerning the timing of sub-committee. This was left to the discretion of the sub-committees.

- Chairman Feild asked that Greg Anderson write a letter on behalf of the Committee expressing gratitude for their hospitality and the use of their fine facility.
- Richard Seekins reported that Dominion Generation had dropped plans to build a gas burning power plant that would require water from a regional water authority associated with Persons Co., Caswell Co., Roxboro, and Yanceyville. The facility would have been located about 3000 feet outside the basin. It would have required about 8 mgd of water daily. 5mgd would have been returned to the basin while 3 mgd would have been evaporated. The local governments are restudying the issues with the water withdrawal.
- Richard Seekins reported that the official representative from NC would Jennifer Everett of DENR. Indicated that John Morris, DENR, will also be associated in some capacity. There is hope that the NC Advisory Committee will be designated by 4/15/03 and meet shortly thereafter.

**Next Meeting Date:**

The next meeting will be held the week of 3/17-21/03 in South Boston. Greg Anderson will poll the members as to the specific date. The meeting was moved up a week so members could attend the museum exhibit concerning the Staunton River.